A LETTER
From a Person of Quality in *SCOTLAND*,
TO A
Person of Honour in *LONDON*:
Concerning His ROYAL Highness,
JAMES, Duke of York.

SIR,

THE acquaintance that I contracted with you when I was last in *England* with Duke *H.* and the several Discourses, that with so much freedom we had together, concerning the state of affairs then in agitation, makes me thus familiarly renew that friendship which grew then between us, whereby you will see, how much I am alter'd from my self since that time: You cannot have forgot I am sure, in what opposition I then stood against the *D.* of *Y.* succeeding to the Crown, and then so firm, that all you could say, tho' back't with strong arguments and reasons, could not any ways shake me, and therefore you may now justly wonder how it should come about, that I should now write to you in his behalf; I intended this Letter at the beginning of the Parliament at *Oxford*, and thought it might arrive to you time enough before they might meddle with the Bill of Seclusion, if they should endeavour it at all, knowing the Aversion of his Majesty from putting by his Brother from his *Hereditary* right, and tho' to our wonder, the Parliament was Dissolved, before we could think it was well begun, and before I could Write what I intended, yet since the Duke has many Enemies in *England*, I have, in letting you see my thoughts as to his right of Succession, shewed you that his vertues have begotten here, even in this Cold and bigoted Country, some Friends.

But before I enter upon my Reasons that any man who shall endeavour to put by the *D.* of *Y.* from his *Hereditary* right, violates the Laws of the Land, scandalizes his Religion, and does Unjustice to his Prince, I shall acquaint you how I came to be thus interested for the Duke, who was so much once against him. And first I declare to you, lest you should suspect that it might be the change of my Religion that should have made this change in my Politick opinion, that I am still, and ever shall be, of the same Religion I was born and bred in, that is, a *Protestant*; and that I have as much aversion for the Religion of the Duke, as I have a love and affection for his person. But the greatest motive that begot in me a Veneration for the Duke, and so Consequently for his just interest, is the personal knowledgde of his very many Excellencies and vertues which has raised in me, not only an ordinary Esteem, but has made me justly think him to be in himself no ordinary man, but one worthy of the greatest Crown in *Europe*. Before I knew him but at a distance, and tho' I had often seen him and been in his presence, yet I had received his Characters at second hand, and found him sometimes represented one thing, sometims another, according to the several opinions and Interests of persons, so as my knowledge of this great man, was very much disguised, and in the dark, till his residing here among us, gave me and many others, a clear prospect both of his Persons Actions, and Vertues. I shall not go about to Characterize him to you, who so well know him, and who so often from those many shining and excellent Vertues in him, has raised up Arguments to bring me from the opinion I had entertain'd against him. But you see that he himself, by his Actions and Convers, in a little time, has been able to do more then all the words and Arguments in the world could do.

Having thus shewed you upon what account I am become the Dukes friend, you cannot now think it strange, that as an Effect of that Reverence and esteem, I have received from so worthy a person, I should write to you in his behalf. And tho' the Parliament be Dissolved, and that we fear not from thence, the prejudice many did expect, yet I shall tell you in few words, my mind; that I think it both unreasonable and Unjust, for any Subject of *England* to attempt his Seclusion from the Crown. And I must here further protest unto you, that although I had never so great esteem for the D. yet were it not just, Lawful, or Right for him to succeed in the *Throne* of *England*, I should never open my mouth, nor use any Arguments in his behalf, but the Right, Justice, and Equity, that I believe him to have on his side, makes me trouble you with these: And I must also beg your pardon, that I presume to tell you my opinion, and to lay down my weak Reasons for the Justice of the Dukes cause, since I know you are already furnished with such, that may in Law and Equity, be a sufficient Bulwork to defend his right against all the opposition can be made from Rational & men, therefore honoured Sir, I shall be obliged to use the less Arguments to you upon that Subject, nor will the scantling of a Letter give leave for long *Harangues*, or for Oratorious pleadings of the Case.

In the first place, I suppose there are none, even among his violent oppoſers, that any ways question the *D.* right of Succession, so that his indubitable right to succeed his Brother (whom God long preserve) if he hath no Legitimate children,

is

is not the Question. But whether it be Commodious or profitable to the Nation or the people of *England*, that he ſhould ſucceed, becauſe a *Roman Catholique* is the thing ſtood upon: We ſhall not here at all queſtion the right and power that the King and his Parliament may have to diſpoſe of the Succeſſion, and to cut off the D. from all hopes of ſucceeding to the Crown, we will grant it, that it is in their power ſo to do, but all that I have to urge to you, is, That in ſo doing, they would be very unjuſt, or at leaſt give very hard meaſure to the Duke, onely becauſe he has chang'd his Religion, and by which means, they have entertained an Opinion, that he will bring in Popery, and alter the Religion of *England*: But I think it is a Maxim in the Chriſtian Religion, that we ought not to commit an evil, that good might come thereon; and therefore, if putting the D. by his juſt and indubitable Right, be a committing an evil againſt Juſtice, Law, and Right, it ought not to be done in any expectancy of all the good that ſhall follow thereupon; And how they can ſalve ſuch an Act, which is decryed by all Princes, and by many wiſe and great perſons, from injuſtice and wrong, I cannot tell. The jealouſies and fears of the people, ought not to ſtir up thoſe in Authority to do injuſtly; and it is feared likewiſe, that the bringing in of Popery, as a conſequence of his ſucceeding to the Crown, is buz'd about into the peoples ears, and thereby increaſing their fears and Jealouſies, by ſome perſons, who may perhaps have other deſigns in their heads, not only of breaking the Legal-line of Succeſſion, but that alſo of all Kingly Succeſſors: So that, whilſt by this means, the people ſeek to maintain their Religion, they will be forced to looſe their Government, and be reduced again to the many Arbitrary-headed Monſter, whoſe paws will be far more heavy than the Royal Scepter in the Hand of the D. and this I doubt will be all that will be got by Secluding the D. This one thing is enough to make the King fearful of yielding to ſuch an Act, and to cauſe him by all means to endeavour, the ſecuring to his people, the Antient Government of the Kingdome, as well as Religion and Property, ſince there are alſo fears and jealouſies on the one hand, as well as the other.

I ſee my Letter grows long, and therefore beg your excuſe, that I huddle up what more I have to ſay, which might be enlarged upon.

I ſay further, That the Great and Heroick Love, as well as juſt and pious, that His Majeſty has for his Brother, ſhould become Argument to his people, not to urge things ſo violently againſt the Duke, and ſo oppoſite to the Affection of His Majeſty, he having Declared, *That there is nothing that a* Parliament *can demand, to ſecure them in their Religion, and to quiet their Fears and Jealouſies, he will not willingly grant them, excepting this one thing, of utterly ſecluding his Brother from his Right, which is againſt his Conſcience.* I ſay, that methinks in this matter, the People ſhould be as tender of the Conſcience of their King, as he is of the Deſires of his People; and that a medium may be found out, that may ſatisfie both the one and the other, without laying this Axe of Secluſion to the Root of the Tree: And to add to the Weight in the Dukes Scale, and to oppoſe thoſe who would have him to be the Cauſe of the Troubles of the Nation, (tho' nothing yet has been plainly proved, that his Enemies can lay to his Charge) I ſay the people ought not to forget the many Heroick and Valiant actions he has done for his Countrey, how boldly and willingly he has ventured his Blood and Life, in the *Dutch* Wars, expoſing himſelf to all manner of Dangers, for the ſake of his Country, for which, like the Noble *Themiſtocles*, he is in Danger of running the ſame fate, of being Baniſh'd by thoſe people, to whom he had brought the Crown of Victory: But however, juſtly the *Athenians* thought they might do it, his Baniſhment to this day, ſtands as a Brand of their Ingratitude and ill Nature, in the Records of Hiſtory; as no doubt, will this Secluſion of the Duke, after his Valiant Actions, be recorded to the Diſhonour and ingratitude of your Nation.

We ſhould now examine, how far the Religion of the Prince, is conſiſting with the Eſſence of Government, and whether there be that danger to the Proteſtant Religion, from a Popiſh Succeſſor, as his Adverſaries pretend, and many Arguments might hence ariſe, which might give an Eſclariſment to the matter in queſtion, but I doubt I have Treſpaſſed already too long upon your patience, and therefore ſhall not trouble you farther at this time concerning them, believing you ſufficiently furniſhed of your ſelf, with a true ſpeculative knowledge of thoſe Caſes, and that you are able there-hence to raiſe many Arguments, in ſo juſt a cauſe. But before I bid you farewel, I muſt alſo take notice, that in preſſing the King to perform an Act of Violence to himſelf, they might ily diſtruſt Providence, for after all, the Duke being ſo little under the age of the King, he may firſt dye, and by that moſt natural way ſecure them from their many fears and Jealouſies of dangers, that may accrue to them by his Succeſſion, if Providence thinks good; but if not, and that he ſhould ſurvive, I queſtion whether an Act of Parliament would be able to keep him from endeavouring to obtain his Right: It is therefore the beſt way to wait a while, and to ſubmit to Providence, who knows beſt how to diſpoſe of all things, and not to be too anxious and fearful of things, as may never come to paſs, and not to run into unjuſt Actions, in order to prevent them. Pardon me, I beſeech you, the trouble I have given you, ſince I was urged to it by the Affection I have to a perſon, that I believe moſt in the World are miſtaken in, becauſe Ignorant of his Worth, I am

SIR,

Your moſt Humble and Faithful Servant.

Printed for Joſeph Heath-coat, *in the Year*, 1681.

194568